

HEMI-SYNC® AS A THERAPEUTIC ADJUNCT FOR TREATING DISSOCIATIVE IDENTITY DISORDERS

by Susan B. Lindsey, M.Div.

Susan B. Lindsey, M.Div., of Herndon, Virginia, is a pastoral counselor in practice since 1978. She has been a professional member of The Monroe Institute® since February 1995. Susan has studied at Wesley Theological Seminary and PC & CC's Institute of Pastoral Psychotherapy. She has extensive experience in neuro-linguistic programming (NLP), hypnosis, and eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) and specializes in working with dissociative disorders. In this paper based on her presentation at the 1995 Professional Seminar, Reverend Lindsey defines dissociative identity disorder (DID) and describes her therapeutic treatment style. She then discusses some outcomes of adding Hemi-Sync audioguidance tools to this repertoire and the potentials for—and drawbacks to—Hemi-Sync intervention with DID clients.

I work primarily with clients who have suffered severe, ongoing childhood abuse. Most of them are diagnosed with dissociative identity disorder (formerly multiple personality disorder). They are marvelous, intelligent, gifted, and creative people. They have also lived with unimaginable trauma. Part of their enormous creativity is the ability to dissociate in order to survive overwhelming circumstances.

The definition from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders: DSM-IV, source of the latest official criteria used to diagnose DID, is:

The presence of two or more distinct . . . personality states (each with its own relatively enduring pattern of perceiving, relating to, and thinking about the environment and self).

At least two of these . . . personality states recurrently take control of the person's behavior.

The inability to recall important personal information that is too extensive to be explained by ordinary forgetfulness.

. . . not due to the direct physiological effects of a substance . . . or a general medical condition.

The creation of this condition requires extreme and ongoing trauma in early childhood (usually before age eight). Over 85 percent of DID cases include ongoing sexual abuse. Some DID clients have experienced systematic sadistic abuse (ritual abuse) including intentional creation of personalities through torture and manipulation or programming of those personalities so they believe and behave exactly as the perpetrators wish.

Therapy usually encompasses three stages:

1. life stabilization (providing a safe external environment, switching between personalities by choice, functional coping mechanisms, and addressing substance abuse, eating disorders, or any other disorder that would interfere with the therapeutic outcome);
2. recovering and metabolizing memories (including altering dysfunctional beliefs and ways of relating to the world) with either integration of personalities or co-consciousness and highly functional cooperation between them; and
3. post-memory recovery work (establishing normalized living through aids such as bodywork, nutrition, and recreation).

While these three stages of therapy are not totally separate, most of the work that I do with clients is in the middle stage of therapy—the recovery and metabolizing of traumatic memory. The process involves establishing a trusting therapeutic relationship with all the personalities and providing an environment in which they can recall and rework their traumatic pasts. This enhances their functioning and satisfaction in the present. Toward that end, I utilize an eclectic approach with standard therapeutic listening and intervention techniques, some neuro-linguistic programming patterns, eye movement desensitization and reprocessing, flower essences, imagery, and hypnosis (used solely for improving coping mechanisms).

Severe trauma survivors show “permanent” brain changes due to the abuse. They often live in a state of constant physiological and emotional arousal. Some changes are biochemical, while others—those which specifically sparked my interest in Hemi-Sync technology—are a reduction in alpha and theta brain-wave activity. I hoped that an outside source which would passively generate more of these brain-wave states would be beneficial. I also hoped my clients could utilize some of the Human Plus functions as a coping resource.

Audio speakers on either side of the sofa where most clients sit deliver various METAMUSIC® Artist selections in the background during private and group counseling sessions. Thus far, the most dramatic results have been observed with the METAMUSIC Artist Series.

Here are descriptions of two cases and the benefits both clients have received from Hemi-Sync. Client 1 is a poly-fragmented ritual abuse survivor who has been in counseling with me for almost two and one-half years. She was diagnosed as MPD three years ago by another therapist and had received twelve years of counseling prior to correct diagnosis. During our time together, she had met many first-layer personalities (ritual abuse survivors usually have multiple layers of alternate personalities), remembered and worked through memories pertaining to the primary non-cult perpetrator, discovered that the ritual abuse existed, and was beginning to process some ritual abuse memories. I estimated that integration of the first-layer alter personalities would take place slowly over at least another year and that knowledge of individual second-layer alters was approximately six months in the future.

The first order of Hemi-Sync tapes arrived on March 8, 1995, and I began playing them immediately, taking time only to give appropriate explanations and secure releases. Client 1 was coming to individual sessions twice a week and to group counseling once a week. During the first session with Hemi-Sync, I met two personalities from the second layer. Within five weeks, Client 1's entire first layer was ready to integrate! Utilizing a variation of a portion of the NLP Core Transformation Process, Client 1—over three individual sessions—reparented a total of sixty upper-layer personalities from conception to their internal perceived ages, and all sixty integrated. EMDR was used to solidify the integration, which has held completely. Other second-layer personalities are now introducing themselves. Client 1's independent assessment is that her therapy has been shortened by a year.

Client 2 is a ritual abuse survivor who has been with me for several years. I have talked with a few personalities over that time, but her system is so anxious (and programmed so thoroughly to hide) that even she has not had clarity about the different personalities. As with Client 1, METAMUSIC Artist selections have simply played in the background during her counseling sessions. Over the course of three months, Client 2 has made a number of significant changes more quickly than anticipated. Internal switching from personality to personality has slowed so that she is able to complete many more thoughts rather than interrupting herself in mid-sentence. She stays on a single topic much longer and allows feedback from others to sink in more readily. Complete memories are replacing scattered fragments, and she is getting clearer on a significant number of her personalities. She has asked for flower essences and an EMDR session—both of which she was too frightened to try previously—evidence of calmer mental processes. Client 2's therapeutic process has also undoubtedly been shortened, though I have no sense of how much.

Each DID client who has experienced the Hemi-Sync sound seems to respond uniquely. The tapes the preceding clients listened to were not specified, in part because I did not attribute the outcomes they experienced to the specific tapes. Client 1 originally heard *Cloudscapes*, and it became the tape which accessed the lower-level personalities. This access was so deep that it was necessary to play a different tape during the group she attended. Once she integrated, *Cloudscapes* ceased to have any particular potency; she said we would have to find another tape for the next layer. After the response to *Cloudscapes* was in place, her internal personalities utilized it until that phase of her work was completed. This woman has been very clear and specific in her choices for working with the second-layer identities—*Hope* and *Resonant Tuning*. Client 2 heard at least *Cloudscapes*, *Inner Journey*, and *Midnight* during her counseling sessions and has taken a copy of *Cloudscapes* for listening at home. I believe that the combination of Hemi-Sync patterns with particular musical elements is a crucial component in client preference and expect to continue seeing very individualistic responses with different clients and situations.

All fifty Human Plus tapes have been acquired and made available, but this series has not been as helpful as I had hoped. Drawbacks are inherent in the tape structure. The Security Repository Box triggers overwhelming memories for many ritual abuse survivors; likewise, guidance in a man's voice. *Resonant Tuning* is a major trigger because it has so much in common with chanting during rituals (although this exercise did serve as an entree to significant memories in two cases). Finally, some ritual abuse clients are totally averse to anything that even hints of programming or mind control from any source. Following recovery and metabolizing of memories, a number of clients have made use of H-Plus.

For those who respond favorably to this sound technology, I expect to continue to see surprising and delightful outcomes.

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